



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE ARTISTS' RECEPTIONS.

THE receptions recently held by the artists of the Sherwood and Holbein studio buildings were attended by hundreds of persons interested in art, and hundreds of others interested in learning to what species of man an artist belongs, how he lives and how he appears under his own vine and fig-tree. There was the usual proportion of bright, handsome, gorgeously costumed ladies, and the groups that gathered around favorite paintings here and there successfully rivalled in composition and brilliancy of coloring, the richest productions on the easels. Both receptions were exceedingly agreeable, despite the large number of visitors, and the artists have reason to congratulate themselves upon the intelligent interest that was shown so generally among those who were there. This interest, too, bore fruit for the artists in several instances—some of the pictures finding admirers who were constrained to take them to their homes, to enjoy them for years after the pleasant reception has become only a shadowy memory.

It seems strange to the writer that artists' receptions are not more general and more frequent—especially "Studio-building receptions." It is true, preparation for one of these occasions interferes with an artist's work for some days both preceding and succeeding the reception, but then he must more than gain what he loses in his increased acquaintance with art-loving people. Very often artists have made important sales in the wake of these receptions, sales which prove the importance of the artist and picture buyer being acquainted and on good terms.

The era of general "studio visiting" seems almost to have departed, and in many cases it is as well for the artist that it has. The average visitor who has no intention of buying pictures, be he ever so agreeable a friend, usually perpetrates an unintentional—but nevertheless real—unkindness in calling, especially if he forgets to make his call short. An interruption to an artist at a critical period in his work may be fatal to its excellence, and actually result in the loss of a large amount of money. Sometimes, too, an expensive model is kept waiting at the artist's expense, and again, a precious bit of daylight may be lost when he is struggling to finish a certain work within a certain length of time, for exhibition purposes. Many of the artists are now setting apart certain days for the reception of visitors, upon these grounds. However, though the picture buying public may be invited to call on such days, persons are more easily attracted for the first time, by a studio reception, particularly when a large number of studios can be visited without special calls upon each artist.

* * *

The studio buildings of the present time, which usually can accommodate a score or more of artists, and which are erected with special reference to their requirements, are most excellent in affording opportunities for these general receptions, and offer advantages to the artists in other ways.

Artists, of all persons, derive peculiarly great benefit from association and the interchange of ideas and criticisms, and in these buildings they can exchange visits easily and

frequently. In such buildings there should be the highest degree of congeniality; there all are striving for the attainment of power in expression, and as nearly all are working for this through different directions, there need be no jealousies. Such association creates a neighborly—brother-like—disposition among the artists, which might never be so strong under other circumstances.

* * *

Years ago, the average artist's studio was little more than a dingy workshop. It was usually on the top floor of some tall building, was small in compass and generally had a single murky window in the roof, through which the light had a painful struggle for admission. Upon the walls appeared fragmentary sketches in oil, charcoal, or whatever medium was most convenient when inspiration came. The floor was bare and spotted with paint. Unframed studies lay here and there; uneasy, shabby furniture obtruded itself, and one or two frail easels and a dirty palette or two gave the room its distinctive character. If the unhappy painter happened to be a bachelor, a rough wooden box doing duty as a table, guiltless of linen, but with some heavy, unclean earthenware upon it, told how he fought the wolf from the door, while a pile of empty bottles in a corner, and some scattered cigar stumps, were mementoes of an occasional sale. An extemporized cot, in a corner partitioned off by some cheap drapery, and a poor little stove that could swallow only a single small shovelful of coal at a time, usually completed the picture when the artist was absent and the work under way was turned with its face to the wall. Otherwise, the scene was even more disordered and discouraging in its principal features.

But all this is greatly changed now; the average studio of to-day is no longer a retreat in which the artist hides from the world, in the midst of disorder that is mis-named artistic; instead, it more often partakes of the nature of a splendid *salon* or interesting museum to which the artist may sometimes invite the world and to which the world is usually very glad to go. The uninitiated visitor, who has been acquainted only with the traditional studio of story writers, is often surprised to see walls hung with costly tapestries and superb mirrors, while his foot sinks into rich rugs from Smyrna and Constantinople, and luxurious, inviting couches tempt him to forget the lapse of time. Not that all studios are of this gorgeous nature, but even the humblest of them now shows steps taken in the direction of convenience and comfort, if not elegance. Some of the studios, as I have remarked, are almost like museums, with armor, trophies of the chase, ceramics, costumes, musical instruments or what not, according to the direction of the artist's work, hung upon the walls or disposed about the apartment. Others filled with paintings—generally attractive studies by the artists, with occasional examples of the works of friends, or valuable works secured at auction sales—almost resemble miniature art galleries.

An article on the distinctive characteristics of the different classes only, of New York studios, while it might contain matter of interest, could scarcely be treated in a single paper.